

| Number | Effective | Title                        | Owner          |
|--------|-----------|------------------------------|----------------|
| I-70   | 6-99      | Public Relations/Information | Communications |

## 1.1\_ PURPOSE

To encourage and guide staff in developing a local public relations and public information program.

Public relations is getting people to know us and like what we do. That includes everything from park cleanliness to having a friendly person to talk with in a park or office, or remembering the employees at the park or office who cooperated with a local community event. Public information means letting the people around you know what you do, why and how it benefits them. An individual state park's publics are: (1) the local communities, civic leaders and immediate neighbors, and (2) the traveling public using IDPR areas.

Although this procedure frequently refers to park staff, much of it can be applied to IDPR employees in day-to-day interface with clients/visitors.

## 2.1 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

### 2.1.1 Develop community pride in park/community association.

Involve all employees in the civic activities of the local community. Encourage the park staff to let the local citizens know that much of the park's appeal will carry over to the community and that in that same sense, the community will have a large part in forming overall visit impressions of recreationists using the park--especially out-of-state visitors.

2.1.1.1 Publicize park in local Chamber of Commerce publications (i.e., travel information).

2.1.1.2 Ensure park location signs or information is added to city signs.

2.1.1.3 Publicize cooperation between park and community.

2.1.1.4 Be sure to point out new features or accomplishments when local people are in the park.

2.1.1.5 Publicize local citizens' assistance in park development or administration.

### 2.2.1 Develop "visible" pride within staff with regard to their profession and their park.

Develop an "esprit de corps" among the staff. Develop a pride in the staff uniform and pride in the job the staff is doing. A quality job can only be done by a staff that is sold on the value of the job they are doing.

2.2.1.1 Encourage park staff to seek and accept speaking engagements concerning their profession and their park.

2.2.1.2 Maintain a close watch over the appearance (vehicle and uniform) and conduct of park staff.

2.2.1.3 Encourage park staff to participate in school programs through providing nature and environmental education opportunities.

2.2.1.4 Develop a "key-person" list in each community and keep these people informed.

### 2.3.1 Develop feelings in the community that the local park staff are civic leaders. Encourage the park staff to become an active part of the community. Establish the fact that the staff are

members of the community as well as state employees and as such are concerned for the good of the community.

2.3.1.1 Encourage park staff to join local civic groups--Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Lions, etc.

2.3.1.2 Encourage park staff to participate in local civic and social functions; community beautification, Take Pride in Idaho, etc.

2.4.1 Promote local and special interest in the park. Encourage local park staff to promote use of the park for local and special events. This is designed to let the people of the area know that the park is for everyone, not just the traveling public. This will also allow promotion of conservation and recreation education, thus producing a more informed and enlightened recreating public.

2.4.1.1 Encourage the use of the park as a nature laboratory by schools, etc.

2.4.1.2 Promote the use of park by sports groups where compatible (i.e., fishing derbies, boat races, etc.).

2.4.1.3 Encourage use by special groups (i.e., company picnics, scout encampments, etc.).

2.4.1.4 Garden clubs, school classes, conservation groups, civic clubs, youth groups, etc., are often looking for local outdoor projects; let them know what they can do for the park that is compatible with its goals and plans.

2.4.1.5 Encourage Red Cross swimming lessons, etc.

2.4.1.6 Develop an abbreviated list of park uses and goals for media and community handouts--such as services available, group facilities, things clubs can do for the park, etc.

2.5.1 Encourage park staff to subtly show how the park is a social and economic benefit to the community. If the people of the community can see how the park is a social and economic benefit to the community, they will probably be more conscious of the impression they impart to visitors. They will also be able to see how our program is a direct benefit to their livelihood.

2.5.1.1 Provide media with use figures periodically; cost figures of maintenance and development work; pictures of special points of interests, special events and crowds in the park.

2.5.1.2 Encourage media representatives to check out park stories they obtain from elsewhere with you and your staff.

2.5.1.3 Provide media with information about new employees.

2.5.1.4 Invite media representatives on "show me" trips in the park; offer to show them around.

2.5.1.5 Visit local paper, radio, TV stations to talk to the editor, news director or reporters--make it a habit.

2.6.1 Be receptive and encourage local support and suggestions for improvement and/or expansion of facilities.

2.6.1.1 Encourage park users to make suggestions for improvement of existing facilities and services.

2.6.1.2 Encourage local civic leaders to support the facilities.

2.6.1.3 Provide a suggestion and comment box.

2.6.1.4 Encourage local groups to promote other areas for inclusion in the park system.

2.6.1.5 Let people know we are thinking of their desires when we contemplate future developments.

- 2.7.1 Use the services of the public information office to expand your program beyond your local area and to bring materials from the state offices to your area.

In the field, park personnel are the information specialists for their own areas; they are in a position to know their local media and communities, and they are in the best position to speak authoritatively on their parks.

- 2.7.1.1 Call on the information office for audio-visual materials available, technical assistance, sources for public information dissemination, etc.
- 2.7.1.2 Supply the information office with information about any activities or changes at the park that deserve statewide publicity, so while the manager deals with local media the information office can contact out-of-area media. Also, supply information on things in the park area or activities that are unique or unusual that could be incorporated in central office news releases, articles, and other material.
- 2.7.1.3 Alert the central office to pictures that could be used by out-of-area media or in slide shows or speeches.
- 2.7.1.4 The central office produces statewide brochures, provides statewide publicity and will attempt to keep field personnel up to date on department activities, philosophy, grant projects, etc.

### **3.1 USE OF FEES**

- 3.1.1 Visitor perceptions are shaped by the value they perceive they achieve through paying park fees.
- 3.1.2 The payment of fees should be viewed as a statement of partnership between visitors and the department to promote stewardship of park resources and provide reasonable access by visitors to these resources.
- 3.1.3 Persons who benefit directly from state park facilities and services should pay a greater portion of the costs of provision. The portion they pay should increase as use of the facility is limited to specific users rather than the general public.
- 3.1.4. Park user fees and charges should be designed and administered on the basis of the best available knowledge of the costs of providing visitor facilities and services and the impacts of visitors on park resources. This includes the life cycle cost of facilities (i.e., acquisition, development, maintenance, and operation).
- 3.1.5 Revenue raised through fee programs in parks should be dedicated to ensuring stewardship of park resources and providing public access to those resources. Revenue raised through fee programs for Visitors Centers or Recreation Bureau programs should help to support the mission of those programs.
- 3.1.6 Fees and charges represent only a portion of the revenues needed to develop, operate, and maintain a state park system, and are not a substitute for state's investment in its state park system.
- 3.1.7 The design of a program of fees and charges should be clearly linked to specific purposes (e.g., resource protection, visitor facilities and services, revenue generation) so as to guide its implementation.
- 3.1.8 Park user fees and charges should be structured and administered in ways that provide incentives for park managers to collect fees, and incentives for visitors to pay fees. Revenues from fees and charges should be shared across the park system — part being retained for use at the park where collected and the remainder allocated under a clearly-

stated, revenue-sharing policy.

- 3.1.9 Development administration of user fees and charges should be accompanied by improvements in cost control, operational efficiency, use of partnerships, and accountability.
- 3.1.10 There should be a strong and visible linkage between the fees and charges paid by visitors and the quality of services and benefits received by visitors. High quality facilities and their continued reliability is more important than price alone.
- 3.1.11 Fees and charges should be based, at least partially, on a consideration of private sector fees and charges and impacts on local communities.
- 3.1.12 Park managers should be authorized and encouraged to administer user fees and charges with sensitivity to local opportunities, constraints, and issues of social equity.
- 3.1.13 Management of visitor use to protect park resources and enhance the quality of the visitor experience is a legitimate goal of fee programs and a legitimate use of fee revenue.
- 3.1.14 A continuing evaluation program to monitor and analyze the cost effectiveness of user fees and charges should be conducted. It should be funded by a portion of the revenues obtained through fees and charges.

#### **Literature Cited**

Manning, R.; LaPage, W.; Griffall, K.; and Simon, B. 1996. Suggested Principles for Designing and Implementing User Fees and Charges in the National Park System. In: Recreation Fees in the National Park Service. Minnesota Extension Service. University of Minnesota.